L. C. Fraud G. B. V 267

THE

SPEECH

OF A

SCOTS WEAVER:

DEDICATED TO

RICHARD GLOVER, Esq.

LONDON:

Printed for W. NICOLL, at No. 51, in St. Paul's Church-yard. MDCCLXXIV.

RICHARD GLOVER, Eſq.

TO you, Sir, I addreſs the following ſheets; becauſe to you alone I owe the ſubject matter of them.

Much did I regret that my abſence from town prevented me from hearing the diſplay of your eloquence at the bar of the Houſe of Commons; but my loſs has been amply made up, by your ſubſequent Publication.—There you have fully obviated all the doubts I had conceived, as to the nature of your harangue. —I thought you had been flattered by the partiality of your friends: But I am now convinced, *That you really believe* it is for the intereſt of Great Britain to

encourage German linens rather than our own:—That the Author of Leonidas alone underſtands Scotch affairs; and that not one of a million and a half of people in that country knows any thing of the matter:—That the Scots, by carrying from England into their own country half a million of gold in exchange for paper, ruined their linen manufactory:—That the king of Pruſſia will deſtroy our woollen manufactures, ſhould we tax the Sileſia linens; although by his edict long ſince promulgated, he has totally prohibited the importation of them into his dominions: And many other propoſitions of *equal truth and importance.*

I can now, Sir, ſee the reaſon why the Scotch nation, acute and ingenious

as

as you allow them to be, had ſuch difficulty in being convinced *by your arguments* that Nine was more than Five:—And although your ſpeech ſupplied me with ſome melancholy thoughts; yet theſe were ſoon baniſhed by the pleaſing reflections I made, on the happineſs you muſt enjoy in the internal conſciouſneſs of your own wiſdom and importance.—"The frog is charmed with her own "ſong."——Far be it from me, Sir, even to wiſh, that my ſentiments ſhould impreſs you with other feelings; on the contrary, I hope that my attempt to anſwer your elaborate oration, will but confirm you in your preſent opinion.—The poets well know, that pleaſing dreams are as good as realities, whilſt they laſt.—That you may continue to live until theſe happy effuſions of imagi-

nation ceaſe, is my wiſh; if ſo, there will be no more occaſion to inſure your life.

I am, reſpectfully,

Sir,

Your moſt humble and obedient Servant,

THERMOPILÆ.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following ſheets are the work of a Scots manufacturer, now in the country of England.

The publiſher having ſubmitted them to the inſpection of a gentleman of known abilities, was aſſured by him, that they contained matter of much national importance; he therefore gives them to the public without further apology. They appear in the form of a Speech at the bar of the Houſe of Commons; why the author has choſen this mode, we cannot take upon us to determine.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following sheets are the work of a Scots ploughman, now in the country of Kilmarnock.

The publisher having understood there was such a person, and pleased with the specimen of his abilities which he had seen, wrote to him, desiring that he would favour him with a sight of the whole of his productions, in order to his publishing them by subscription, if he should think proper. The author agreed to the proposal, and the publisher, after perusing the manuscript, was of opinion that the publication of it would be for the benefit of the author, as well as agreeable to the public. Our poet, encouraged by this opinion, and the recommendation of several gentlemen of taste in the neighbourhood, to whom he was known, has resolved to venture his fame in the world.

THE

SPEECH, &c.

I Agree with Mr. Glover, that the queſtion now before this Honourable Houſe is of the higheſt national importance.

The ſtrength and power of Great Britain depends on the number of her people; and theſe numbers depend on the full employment that can be given them. If by peſtilence, famine, or the ſword, one half of our people were cut off, whilſt we preſerve the means and inſtruments of employment, the void would immediately fill up. On the contrary, however great our numbers may be, if the means of employing them be wanting, they muſt waſte and decay, and finally ſink down to the number only required for the different occupations in the ſtate.

To illuſtrate this propoſition by a common and familiar example. If a field will maintain preciſely twenty ſheep, and if each ſheep brings forth annually one lamb, it is evident that you may kill twenty every year, and the ſame number will ſtill remain: but ſuppoſing that you kill none; then the ſheep will either never produce, or they will die, or they will leap the fence: for by the hypotheſis, the field can only maintain twenty.

In like manner, if our paſture fail, our numbers will diminiſh; enrich the paſture, and they will encreaſe. This is a ſimple view of the riſe, progreſs, and decay of nations.—Let us apply it to the caſe in hand.

The linen manufacturers of England, Scotland, and Ireland, are now at your bar, complaining that their trade is ruined. They have made out their propoſition, by proving that their prices

are

are fallen within theſe two years from fifteen to twenty-five *per cent.* that the quantities manufactured are diminiſhed near ten millions of yards *per annum*; that above one hundred thouſand people, who were induſtrious manufacturers, are now deſtitute of employment and of bread; and laſtly, that many thouſands have from neceſſity left their habitations, to ſeek, in America, that ſubſiſtence which their own country could not afford them. Theſe are facts undiſputed on all ſides: they ſpeak to the hearts of a Britiſh ſenate, more than the thundering eloquence of a Demoſthenes.

If our people want bread, and emigrate abroad, every landholder in Britain muſt feel the conſequence; the demand for the produce of the ſoil muſt leſſen; the price muſt of courſe fall; rents muſt diminiſh; or the tenant muſt abandon his farm, and even his country. In a word, to trace the fatal conſequences of this event, would be no leſs painful to

me, than to this honourable houſe, who, I am perſuaded, ſee them in their full extent; and ſeeing, will remove what muſt otherwiſe deſtroy this nation.

Permit me now, Sir, with that diffidence which becomes a private man, to point out what appears to me the real ſource of our grievance. This will be beſt done, by conſidering the cauſe.

Mr. Glover has entertained you with a long hiſtory of Scots circulation; in the courſe of which, 600,000l. of gold was carried from England, in exchange for Scots paper. This ſhall afterwards be conſidered; but as he imputes the preſent ſtate of the linen manufacture to this cauſe, I will now endeavour to ſhew how far he is miſtaken.

1ſt. The decay of the linen manufacture preceded even the inſtitution of the Air Bank. The weaver has been loſing by his buſineſs for many years. So ſoon

as

as Germany was reſtored to tranquillity, after the late war, and the people were re-eſtabliſhed in their manufactures, the goods imported from thence became cheaper than they could be made here, at home; and this has gone on increaſing gradually and progreſſively, ſo that now they have obtained a general preference. The Britiſh and Iriſh manufacturers were not, however, immediately diſcouraged; they had gained money during the war; they continued their trade in hopes of better days; and it was only after heavy and repeated loſſes, that they began, in 1769 and 1770, to diminiſh their trade. Now the decreaſe in 1772 could not ariſe from the convulſion felt in the mercantile ſyſtem in the courſe of that year, becauſe a piece of linen from the flax takes two years to ſpin, weave, and bleach, before it comes to market; and the decline had taken place three years before that period. Wherefore the decreaſe was ſo far from being occaſioned, even in Scotland, by

the misfortunes of 1772, that it actually begun at the very period of 1769 and 1770, when there ought to have been an encreaſe of this commodity, by the facility which prevailed at that time, of obtaining money in the courſe of circulation.

2dly. The manufacturing counties of England and Ireland feel the decay of the linen manufacture in a ſtill higher degree than Scotland; yet, Scotland has hardly any commercial connection with them; none that can effect this queſtion. Here then is an effect much greater than the cauſe; a Scots circulation which has deprived England and Ireland of their linen manufactures, although neither of them had the moſt diſtant connexion with that country; yet they are both more affected than Scotland itſelf.

But let us attend to what muſt have been the natural effect of the circulation in Scotland.

Mr.

Mr. Glover ſays the Scots obtained from England 600,000 l. of gold and ſilver, in exchange for their paper. None of this money is yet repaid. A great acceſſion of money will account for an encreaſe of trade and manufactures; it will account for high prices; but with Mr. Glover only, will it account for a prodigious decreaſe, and a great fall in the value of any article of commerce. The reſt of the world are yet left to ſeek the cauſe; let us now try if we can diſcover it.

Great-Britain pays in groſs, about twelve millions yearly, in taxes; or, about fifty ſhillings yearly, for every living ſoul in the iſland. Ireland is alſo greatly taxed. She maintains an army and civil eſtabliſhment, more expenſive than any nation in Europe, in proportion to the numbers of her people. Germany, after profiting by the millions ſpent by Great-Britain in the late war, enjoys perfect tranquillity. Tho' articles

of luxury, in ſome diſtricts, and the ſoil itſelf, be taxed, the ſubſiſtence of the labourer is no where taxed. He can live and ſupport his family for ſixpence per day, over all Germany; in Great-Britain and Ireland, he can barely do it for nine pence per day. It will appear a paradox, but it is nevertheleſs true, that this circumſtance conſidered, labour and manufactures are cheaper in Britain than in any other European country. The ſuperior capitals, the ſkill of our people, and the invention of machinery, has, in ſome degree, compenſated for our heavy taxes in all our manufactures; and in thoſe where machinery can be employed to the greateſt advantage, they fully make up for the dearneſs of labour. Unhappily, Sir, the linen manufacture either admits leſs of this than the hard-ware; or at leaſt, has been leſs the ſubject of invention. So far however ſeems certain, that deducting taxes, our labour is as cheap, as in any other European nation.

It has been already ſtated, that every living ſoul in Great-Britain is taxed, on an average, fifty ſhillings. As the families of labourers, one with another, conſiſt of four people, this would make ten pounds in taxes, on every labourer. This, it may be ſaid, is placing the taxes of a weaver on the footing of thoſe paid by an opulent merchant, or a great peer of the realm. A difference there will be; but much ſmaller than is commonly imagined. The richeſt man in Great-Britain eats no more than a peaſant; he can drink no more; he requires no more ſtuff to clothe him *;

* It is not meant here to ſay that a rich man buys no more clothes than a poor man; but that he can wear no more. For ſuppoſing him to buy ſix ſhirts a year, he can only put on one at a time; when the year is out, he either ſells them to another wearer, or gives them to his ſervants, and they become a part of their wages, and it is only the difference between the firſt value and the latter that can be imputed to him. This is the true ſtate of the matter as to the taxes paid by the individual.

he may ſleep longer, but can occupy no more ſpace in a bed, nor more blankets to cover him.—He keeps, however, forty ſervants; he drinks claret, and entertains company; all theſe involve taxes. —True, but on whom? The ſervant pays his own taxes, in the ſame ſenſe as the labourer. His maintainance is part of the wages of his ſervice. Whether a great man gives twenty pound, in the name of board, or thirty pound, in the name of board and wages, it makes no ſort of difference; the ſervant's labour is what pays his maintainance, and conſequently his taxes, although the price of his labour goes from his maſter's pocket. Or, which is the ſame thing, the ſervant's wages are enhanced by the taxes, as much as the labourer's.—A gueſt at a gentleman's table may be conſidered in the ſame point of view. He gives his time to his hoſt, in exchange for his veniſon and claret; and, in many caſes, the purchaſe is dear. Thus, viewing taxes as they affect labour, every man's taxes will be reduced to the con-

ſumption

ſumption of himſelf and his immediate dependants, his wife and children. But the labourer drinks no claret. He drinks, however, porter: he works harder, and will drink more; and many a coal-heaver in London pays more taxes on the liquor he conſumes, than the richeſt duke in England. I will, after all, admit that the rich man pays more taxes than the labourer; although the diſproportion is not great. But ſuppoſing every idle, or rich man in Great-Britain, to pay double the taxes on his conſumption that a labourer does; yet, unleſs it be ſaid that more than a fifth of our people do not labour, this would only diminiſh the taxes paid by the labourer one fifth. In place of ten pounds per annum, or fifty ſhillings per head, which has been ſhewn to be the average rate of taxation, he would only pay forty ſhillings per head, or eight pounds per annum. But this is above one half of the wages of a labourer, or manufacturer, taken on an average, throughout

Great-Britain. We may therefore lay it down as an inconteſtible fact, that the labourer, or manufacturer of Great-Britain is taxed more than half the amount of the wages he draws. If, therefore, the German manufacturer had equal ſkill and machinery, he could afford his goods, excluſive of the raw materials, at half the price of the Britiſh tradeſman.

Here, then, is a cauſe, that muſt operate in giving foreign linens a preference in every market in the world, where they can be brought on equal terms. But the competition is perfectly on equal terms with regard to all America, and to every country but Great-Britain. For although there be a freight from Germany to Britain, this is compenſated fully by the freight of the raw material, flax uſed in the Britiſh manufactures; and the duties on foreign linens being drawn back at exportation, both manufactures ſtand equally at their prime

coſt

coſt when ſent from hence to any part of the world.

Having thus found the cauſe, which lies deep in the very foundation of the Britiſh government; a cauſe which will operate in all times, and in all places, where a competition ariſes between the manufacturer of a country heavily taxed and one that pays few or none;—Let us in the next place look out for the remedy.

Here, Sir, I will agree with Mr. Glover, that it would be better to give up manufactures in which we ſtruggle againſt foreigners on unequal terms, provided we can give our people bread by a more profitable induſtry—If the gentlemen of the woollen manufacture will find employment for the poor linen weavers in their buſineſs, no-body will ſay that the linen branch ought, in that caſe, to be an object of peculiar attention to government. — But let the experiment be

tried. Set but 50,000 of the people now unemployed in the linen branch, to weave woollens, which they could learn to do in three months; What would be the conſequence? We all know there are at preſent as many hands employed as the woollen trade demands.—Encreaſe them; then would the clamour be irreſiſtable, that the woollen manufactory is ruined.—Nevertheleſs, in this caſe, more woollen goods than ever would be at firſt wrought up. But no demand being made for the increaſed quantity, prices would fall, and the quantity would gradually ſink down to the demand of the market; you would then have in the place of humble petitions from Ireland and Scotland, 50,000 woollen weavers at your door.—Their arguments would no doubt awaken the attention, and move the feelings of this Houſe.

The experiment has been already tried with regard to the ſilk.—Some London mercers employed the weavers in Paiſley, a manufacturing town in Scotland, to weave

weave ſilk gauzes; they ſoon reduced the prices 30 *per Cent.* and drove Spitalfields out of the trade.—This was the real occaſion of the diſturbances in London, which we all remember.

The ſame reaſoning will apply to the hardware manufactures.

This queſtion, however, naturally ariſes; How comes it that the woollen and hardware manufactures go on ſucceſsfully, both which muſt be equally affected by our taxes, whilſt the linen manufacturers are teizing the legiſlature, year after year, for bounties on their own linens, and duties on foreign linens? The anſwer is obvious.—The two firſt enjoy a compleat monopoly, both of the home conſumption and the exportation to America.—Let the ſame experiment be tried with the linen, for ſeven years, and there will be found no occaſion for bounties.—Parliament will be no more troubled with applications. This ſingle meaſure

meaſure would, in an inſtant, raiſe the linen trade to a magnitude and importance equal, perhaps ſuperior, to the woollen manufacture, great and important as that now is.—If there be, therefore, no means of employing our people in other branches of buſineſs, and if the linen manufacture cannot employ them without parliamentary protection; they muſt either receive that ſupport, which will enable them to ſubſiſt in Britain; or they muſt and will emigrate. The effects of emigration, with regard to the intereſt of every man who enjoys any portion of the ſoil in Great Britain or Ireland, has already been noticed.—They are ſo manifeſt that they will hardly be denied, even by Mr. Glover.—He has accordingly thought himſelf obliged to account for theſe emigrations, by making them ſolely proceed from the rapacious diſpoſitions of the landlords, in raiſing their rents beyond what their tenants can pay.—It ſtands however in proof before this honourable houſe, that many thouſand

weavers,

weavers, with their families and inſtruments, have gone to America within theſe few years; all people who held no lands, and could not be affected by the riſe of rents.

It will at the ſame time be admitted that ſome tenants and labourers have alſo gone abroad; but whatever clamour may have been raiſed againſt landlords, the cauſe of theſe emigrations, when traced, will be found to ariſe in a great meaſure, if not entirely, from the decay of the linen manufactures.—For it is very well known that the ſpinning is carried on by the families of the farmer and labourer: So that whilſt the manufactures go on proſperouſly, he can pay a good rent to the landlord by the aid of his family, who are ſpinning within doors, while he is employed in the field; but when that reſource fails, his affairs muſt go to wreck: And thus, Sir, the emigration of this claſs of people is, by fair deduction, as imputable to the decay of the

manufactures, as that of the weaver himself.

The question now, Sir, is, what natural and proper remedy can be applied to this disorder?—Bounties have been proposed.—I confess, several difficulties occur to this plan.—First, Bounties, as hitherto given, go only to exportation; whereas, we shall shew hereafter, that the first and natural object of every country should be to supply the demand at home.—Secondly, Bounties are the mother of taxes. You can only give encouragement in this way, by first imposing a tax to pay it, which tends to the increase of wages, and consequently, to raise the price of manufacturing labour.—Thirdly, The bounty is only giving money to America, by selling linens so much cheaper than they could otherwise get them: It is, therefore, an absurd policy; as it is supplying them with the produce of British taxes, in the price of linens, at the very time that it is found

 neces-

neceſſary to tax them for the ſupport of government. — I will therefore lay aſide this plan entirely, and beg leave, in anſwer to the queſtion, to ſay, that the natural and proper remedy is this— Lay on ſuch a duty upon foreign linens as will enable thoſe of the Britiſh and Iriſh manufacture to find a preference in our home conſumption; and when the foreign linens ſhall, by this means, be entirely excluded from ſale here, and the quantity of our own increaſed ſo much as to enable us to participate in the exportation trade; then lay on ſuch duties upon the foreign linens ſhipped from hence for foreign parts, as will ſecure our linen a preference; and finally, when our quantity equals both the home and foreign demand, prohibit all German and other foreign linens whatſoever.

Three objections, from Mr. Glover, occur to this meaſure.

The firſt is, that forcing a trade by legiſlative authority, is miſapplying the national induſtry, and rendering it unprofitable; it is like rearing exotics in hot-beds, which can never thrive and proſper ſo as to be beneficial to the country; but the moment they are abandoned, they will wither and decay: Whereas, by confining our culture to the natural production of our ſoil, no artificial aids will be neceſſary; we will, on the contrary, be able, by the ſurplus of our native produce, to acquire ſuch articles in exchange, on cheaper terms than we can rear them.

I readily admit the principle of this objection, were this country on a footing with the reſt of the world in point of taxation. But, until this be the caſe, which can only be by throwing the whole national taxes upon the ſoil, or its produce, we muſt either renounce every manufacture whatever, or compenſate, by the favour of legiſlature, the heavy

burden now impoſed upon us. I have already obſerved, that it is by the means now propoſed and no other, that our woollen and hardware manufactures have been created.—Both have been raiſed from no very diſtant period to their preſent magnitude and importance, entirely by the active and repeated interpoſition of parliament in their favour: So that although they were reared and nurſed in a hot-bed, they are now hardy and vigorous, and can contend on equal terms with all the reſt of Europe, without any particular favour from the public, as is evident from the large quantities ſent to different European markets under the diſadvantage of both freight and foreign taxation.—Here then are caſes in point.—All theoretical reaſoning is liable to uncertainty; but experience, the guide of all wiſe men, can hardly deceive us. —It were eaſy, by comparing the ſtate of the woollen manufacture in the days of James and Charles the Iſt, and the hardware ſo late as Queen Anne's time, with

the

the ſtate of theſe two manufactures now, to ſhew what will be the conſequences of a ſimilar conduct with regard to the linen; but it would be injurious to the wiſdom of this honourable houſe to ſuppoſe ſuch a detail neceſſary.

The firſt object with every ſtate is to ſecure its own independence, by rearing and cultivating within itſelf, whatever is neceſſary for its exiſtence, defence, or convenience. Few articles are now more neceſſary than linen. If, by prohibiting or taxing foreign linens, the conſumption of Great Britain was ſecured to our own manufactures, we might pay, in the beginning, 1 *d.* or 2 *d.* per yard higher than we do at preſent; but the whole price paid to Germany, &c. would be ſaved; no money would go out of the country; and the landlord, the tenant, and every man intereſted in the proſperity of Britain, would feel the benefit by an increaſed population and a conſequential demand for their reſpective

articles

articles of produce. Even this inconvenience would ſoon be removed; for the competition between the various manufacturers in Britain and Ireland, would early operate, and prices would fall lower than ever.—That this would follow, is not only evident from the hiſtory of the woollen and Birmingham manufactures, but from the linen itſelf, which, in conſequence of the paſt encouragement it has received, is now cheaper and better than ever.—I do not talk of the late ruinous fall of the prices, owing to the competition with Germany; but I affirm, and it will hardly be denied, that regularly and progreſſively as the manufacturers have increaſed in practical ſkill and experience, the goods have been improved and brought cheaper to market. —It may indeed be ſafely averred, that in ten years time, under the advantages of an excluſive market for our own linens for home conſumption, we would be cheaper ſupplied, than by foreign linens at preſent.

When

When the increaſed ſtate of our linen trade will admit of our ſupplying the American market, or of participating in it by taxing foreign linens; the advantages to Britain are equally obvious. What do we gain by ſending ſeven millions of yards of foreign linen to America? The freight, and profit of the merchant.—But if we export our own linen, the whole price is a net increaſe of the national capital. That is, if Great Britain gains 400,000*l.* a year by exporting foreign linens, it would gain, by exporting Britiſh or Iriſh linens, two millions.—And this is allowing the merchant for his profit and freight 20 *per cent.* which Mr. Glover will acknowledge is a very ample allowance.

It may be ſaid, that the American would pay dearer for his linen than at preſent. This will doubtleſs be the caſe, until, by the continued exertions of the rival manufacturers, which would naturally reſult from ſuch encouragement, they

they were enabled by ſuperior ſkill and machinery to compenſate the weight of our taxes. — This is, in a great meaſure, the caſe with the woollen, and it is entirely ſo with the hardware manufactures at preſent.—But ſuppoſing this ſhould never be the caſe with the linen. It will be only and ſolely a tax upon America; a tax which her warmeſt advocates admit your right of impoſing; and which, conſidering the difficulties that are likely to occur in taxing her more directly, is but juſt and equitable. —It will have this further advantage of every other tax, that there will be no charge of collection, and every ſhilling produced thereby, will come clear to the benefit of this country.

It has been ſaid that we ought not to encourage manufactures for internal trade. "*Traffic between ſubject and ſub-*
"*ject cannot be productive of any national*
"*wealth; and it is only by exporting*
"*produce and manufactures that wealth*

"*is received* *." From what ſchool Mr. Glover has learnt this doctrine, I will not pretend to conjecture; for the honour of Scotland, I hope, it was not there; I will preſume it to be a ſpecimen of his "*common ſenſe*," which that country is ſo totally devoid of; may they ever remain ſo!—In that country the opinion is, that the foreign trade of this and of every great nation is trifling, both in point of extent and advantage to the ſtate and the individual, when compared with its internal trade.—The whole capital employed in foreign trade by this opulent and commercial country, is not equal to one year's expence during the late war; nay, it does not exceed the amount of one year's groſs taxes at this moment.—For the truth of this I appeal to the accounts of exports and imports, in viewing which, I deſire only attention to this circumſtance—That the exports and imports are carried on by one and the

* Mr. Glover's ſpeech, p. 32.

the ſame capital; the goods brought into Britain being either returns for the goods ſent out, or the goods ſent out returns for thoſe brought in, bullion included; ſo that only one of them can be put to account, and I leave Mr. Glover his choice of either.

If it be then a certain and undeniable fact, that the whole foreign trade of Great Britain does not employ a capital of 12 millions, and the utmoſt ſtretch of invention cannot make it greater; and were this the only ſource of wealth, or did it indeed bear any proportion to the wealth of the nation; How could we levy 12 millions of groſs taxes yearly, which is our preſent ſituation, although there be not more than 10 millions of net revenue? How could we have carried on a war at an expence of, from 12 to 18 millions yearly, for ſeven years together? I ſhall leave Mr. Glover to reconcile this to his ſyſtem, and will now endeavour to explain it by mine.

Great-Britain contains above five millions of people; Theſe people ſubſiſt at an expence of, at leaſt, eight pounds per head. Here is then an internal trade of at leaſt forty millions yearly. But how does this enrich?—I anſwer, the riches of a country conſiſt in the riches of the individuals in that country; and if theſe will increaſe without foreign trade, the country will grow richer.—If Mr. Glover has land to the amount of 1000 l. a year, he will either cultivate it himſelf, or leaſe it to tenants. In either caſe, the produce will be at leaſt three times the rent. Here is a clear increaſe of capital, although there be no foreign trade. If Mr. Glover rents his lands, and ſpends only 500 l. a year, he will be clearly richer without foreign trade. If the tenants can pay their rents, live and ſave 500 l. they will alſo grow richer.—The ſame reaſoning will apply to every rank in life; to every profeſſion and trade that can exiſt in a country.—Mr. Glover wears a good coat, a wig, and a ſword,

when

when he attends this honourable houſe. —If his barber, taylor and ſword-cutler can live by their buſineſs and ſave 10l. yearly, apiece; although neither wigs, cloaths, nor ſwords are exported, they will grow richer: But as the wealth of a country conſiſts in the accumulated wealth of the individuals, the country itſelf muſt grow richer; and all this, without foreign trade.—I will add further, that this will equally happen (though not ſo rapidly) if there were not a piece of coin, or bullion, in Great Britain.—For example, Mr. Glover may have inveſted, at ſome time, his whole capital on German linen; Was he poorer on that account? It is juſt ſo with the nation; it is the ſtock of induſtry and commodities that form the national wealth.—How trivial a part of our capital conſiſts in coin, has appeared by the late experiments made on the gold.

The next objection is, the influence that any diſcouragement given to the German

German linens here, might have on the ſale of Britiſh woollens in Germany.

The alarm has been ſounded, and the quiet and eaſy woollen manufacturers have been artificially made parties in this queſtion. They deſerve a hearing, and are entitled to every preference compatible with the good of the ſtate, where there ariſes a competition of intereſt. But I will beg leave to aſk one queſtion. Germany was, until lately, the great ſtaple for hardware; Was the woollen manufacture hurt by the eſtabliſhment of the Britiſh hardware, which is now, though but a modern acquiſition, ſold over all the four quarters of the globe, and in very large quantities to Germany itſelf? It can neither be ſaid that it was, nor would the argument be admitted if it had; becauſe the loſs of a woollen trade to the extent of even half a million *, the full amount of

* I am aware of Mr. Glover's aſſertion, that although the exports to Germany be but half a million;

of all our exportations to that country by Mr. Glover's eſtimate, would not juſtify the giving up a manufacture by which the nation acquires ſeveral millions yearly. Yet, the hardware manufacture enjoys a monopoly againſt Germany and all the world; not only of the conſumption of Great-Britain, but of all America.

The argument, if it means any thing, means that foreign princes and ſtates will prohibit, or diſcourage the importation of our woollens, if we tax their linens.

---

million; yet, a great part of what we ſend to Holland goes from thence to Germany, to four times that amount.—I doubt the fact; but were it admitted to its full extent, it does not affect my argument. In the firſt place, I have allowed the whole exports as if they were of woollens; whereas woollens form but a ſmall part of them.—2dly. What paſſes through Holland to Germany goes there as Dutch, not as Engliſh goods: And a total prohibition of Britiſh goods to Germany would only force the whole in place of a part to paſs through Holland.

linens. That at preſent they encourage the one, in conſideration of the benefit they derive from the other. Now it will hardly be diſputed, that the individual, every where, will buy his coat or ſhirt where he can get it cheapeſt. The queſtion is only then with regard to ſtates; and here I will beg Mr. Glover to point out any other country or ſtate in Europe, which has ever conſidered taxation in any point of view but for the purpoſe of revenue, except France a very little, and perhaps of late Pruſſia, in ſome inſtances; and it happens unfortunately for this argument, that our woollens are prohibited in both theſe countries. The maxims that prevail in all nations, appear ſimply theſe; to conſider what the prince or ſtate wants; and, 2dly, what is the eaſieſt way of levying the taxes neceſſary for ſupplying theſe wants. It would be a diſappointment to moſt princes, if our goods were not carried into their country, becauſe they would be deprived of a ſubject of taxation.

Money taxes, although of all others, perhaps, the eaſieſt and beſt, occaſion diſcontents and murmurs; it is frequently impoſſible to raiſe them in the moſt deſpotic governments. But a tax on goods is ſubmitted to by the merchant, becauſe he knows the buyer muſt pay him, with his profits on the tax itſelf, in the price of the goods. The poor conſumer again is deceived. He thinks he is only paying for his coat, when he is perhaps paying, under that name, the hire of a ſoldier to faſten his own chains. Let any man reflect what murmurs the houſe and window tax occaſioned, trivial as they are, and the eaſe with which the malt, ſoap, and candle taxes were ſubmitted to, and he will ſee the force of this obſervation. Our woollens and hardware will find a market wherever they can be ſent better and cheaper than from other countries. Princes will tax them according to their wants or conveniencies; but always ſo as not to diſappoint

the end of taxation, the raiſing of revenue.

But it is ſaid, the king of Pruſſia has the command of the great rivers, and if we diſoblige him, by taxing the Sileſia linens, he will prevent all trade with Germany. Were this plea to have weight, I beg to know where it would ſtop? If he can ruin our woollen trade in conſequence of our laying additional duties on his Sileſia linen, he is equally able to do it unleſs we take off the duties that now exiſt. Nay, he may inſiſt on a bounty on the importation of his linens, and that they ſhall have a preference to our own. If our trade depends on the will of any prince or power on earth, we are no more a free people, but ſubject to the arbitrary dictates of others. Thank God! this is not the caſe; altho' his Pruſſian majeſty does poſſeſs places on moſt of the great rivers, he is ſo far from having the command of the German trade, that he can ſupply very few

few places in his own dominions without paſſing thro' other ſtates, by whom he is ſurrounded on every ſide. This complicated ſituation occaſions an arrangement among the different princes and ſtates whoſe dominions lie on the great rivers; the reſult of which is, mutual conceſſions and rates of taxation, ſuited to their reſpective ſituations and dependencies; theſe no ſingle prince can break through, without quarrelling with all the reſt. The wiſe and beneficent Governor of the univerſe has ſet bounds to the power of princes; he ſays to them as to the ocean, "Thus far ſhall "you go, and no farther." And with regard to the ſea coaſt, we may add, that four Engliſh frigates would effectually block up every communication that prince has with the ſea. It would be trifling to follow the argument further; we have experience to determine the queſtion. We were in open hoſtility with this prince during a great part of the war before laſt; would any civil

regulation excite his animoſity ſo much as the ſupport we gave to the Empreſs-Queen during that period? Is he of that mild and gentle temper, as to ſubmit to injuries, when he can repel them? Did his heart ever refuſe to execute, what his head could dictate for the annoyance of his enemies? Yet, what loſs or injury did our woollen manufactures receive by our contention with that prince? But it is truly contemptible to talk of his reſentment for regulating the internal policy of Great-Britain, according to its own intereſt; when there is not an injury in his power that our woollen manufactures do not ſuſtain at this moment, even to a total prohibition of the importation of them into his dominions.

The law of God, and the policy of all nations, juſtify retaliation; and had our woollen manufacturers petitioned for a prohibition of Sileſia linens, they would have acted with propriety, and would have deſerved regard. Several inſtances can

be ſhewn of ſimilar conduct by our legiſlature; to repeat them would be idle; the book of rates is in every body's hands.

We may, on the whole of this matter, ſafely aſſume, that our woollen trade can never be hurt, but will, on the contrary, be benefited by encouraging the linen; and although the clamour and artifice of ſome intereſted Hamburgh merchants have miſled the woollen counties upon the preſent occaſion, they will ſoon ſee and feel their own intereſt.

Mr. Glover's third objection falls now under conſideration, *viz.* that encreaſing the taxes on foreign linens, will encourage ſmuggling.

He has diſcovered, and ſays he has proof, that there is at preſent one ſmuggling company in Scotland; and he is greatly alarmed that if the duties on foreign linens be increaſed, ſmuggling will

will become general, and the poor linen weaver ruined by the large quantities the ſmugglers will import, and the low prices at which he will ſell his goods. It were well for both Scotland and England that there were but one ſmuggling company in either; but unfortunately, until the minds and morals of men are mended, deſperate and diſhoneſt men will be found in every country where the duties are high, to run all hazards in attempts to earn a profit: But if it will be any ſatisfaction to Mr. Glover, I will inform him that there is more ſmuggling in one month, in the river Thames, than in all Scotland, in one year; and that in the very article of German linens. Conſiderable dealers have been known to enter their goods under wrong denominations, for the ſake of paying an inferior duty, and have thereby added the guilt of perjury to that of ſmuggling. But how does this agree with the reſt of his arguments? for, if additional duties will increaſe the importation of German linens,

linens, then, whether they are ſmuggled or not, is of no conſequence to our German friends. The woollen manufacturers could have no reaſon to complain; and our good ally the king of Pruſſia would have no cauſe for wrecking his vengeance on us. We might ſtill hope that he might content himſelf with prohibiting our woollens in his own dominions, without barring our trade to Germany altogether.

That increaſed duties have a natural and neceſſary tendency to promote ſmuggling is undoubted; this, however, was never heard of as a reaſon for abſtaining to levy any tax which policy required. Brandy pays a duty of eight ſhillings per gallon, and the original value of the ſpirit is frequently under one ſhilling per gallon; and yet very large ſums of duty are annually paid, and brandy keeps up at a price that will afford this duty. Smugglers do not carry on their buſineſs from principles of patriotiſm,

to

to ſupply the market cheap; they do it for their own profit, and ſell as dear, allowing for the riſk of the buyer, as the fair trader. The hazard of ſmuggling is however ſuch, that notwithſtanding the profits they get by ſaving the duties, hardly an inſtance occurs of any man in Great-Britain having carried it to any height, without being ruined. None indeed but people of deſperate fortunes will engage in a buſineſs, where every failure of ſucceſs, by forfeiture of the capital, involves in it the ruin of the adventurer.

If the principle be once admitted, that it is the intereſt of Great-Britain to encourage our own manufactures, rather than the German; I would be glad to know how it is to be done but by duties on the latter. The wiſdom of the Iriſh, in the invention of ſtamps for their linens, has indeed ſuggeſted a means of preventing ſmuggling in that article beyond what can be contrived in almoſt

any

any other. Let every piece of linen be ſtamped, at importation, with the rate of duty paid; this will not only protect the fair trader, but will enable every man who chuſes, to detect any frauds at importation by entering under wrong denominations.

Having now, I hope, fully anſwered Mr. Glover's objections, as far as they deſerve that name; I would here conclude, and leave all his invectives with regard to Scots projects, lunacy and circulation, entirely unnoticed, had I not heard that well meaning though ill informed men have been miſled by them. I will therefore beg your indulgence to make a few obſervations upon this ſubject.

The buſineſs of the Bank of England, and that of all banking ſocieties in Britain, is entirely of one and the ſame nature. It conſiſts in receiving depoſits of money, to lie at the command of the

proprietors, and in iſſuing notes which circulate as money. Theſe two things are the only foundation of profit; and the profit is got, by lending their notes and the money ſo depoſited, in the way of diſcount on bonds or bills. From this it is evident none of them can draw any profit but by extending theſe loans beyond the ſum of actual caſh neceſſary to anſwer the demands that may be made on them, and conſequently all ſuch banks are expoſed to injury and liable to ſtop payment by any ſudden ſhock or diſcredit. Witneſs the year 1745, with regard to the Bank of England; and 1772, with regard to the Air Bank.

The word Circulation is applied in various ſenſes: like Patriotiſm it is ſometimes put for what is moſt advantageous and beneficial in a free country; and ſometimes for what is a moſt pernicious evil to the ſtate. The circulation of the Bank of England notes, Mr. Glover

will acknowledge, is advantageous; but that of the Scots Air Bank, is hurtful; yet both are founded on the ſame baſis, viz. extending their credit upon ſecurities to a greater amount than they have gold or ſilver to anſwer at the time. Mr. Glover will I ſuppoſe allow, at leaſt no man but himſelf will diſpute, that were the Bank of England to have a demand made for all her notes in the circle at any one time, a much greater void would be found there, than in the Air Bank, when ſuch an experiment was tried.

But the Air Bank drew bills on London to ſupport their credit. So did the Bank of England on Holland, during the reigns of both William and Anne; and it is believed ſince that time; tho' there be no ſuch direct evidence of the facts in latter times, as the writers of the former periods afford us. What is then the ground of clamour againſt the Bank of Air? That will beſt appear

from a ſhort account of its inſtitution and hiſtory.

Scotland had long enjoyed two public Banks; but their capitals amounted only to about 100,000 l. each; a ſum too ſmall to be generally and univerſally uſeful. Other inferior banks had in the courſe of time been eſtabliſhed; and a ſet of public ſpirited noblemen and gentlemen, obſerving the increaſe of trade and manufactures, in different places, by means of theſe little local Banks, judged that a more extenſive company, with a capital and credit ſuited to the neceſſities of all, would be of like general advantage to the whole country. About one hundred and fifty men, chiefly of rank and fortune, did accordingly inſtitute a Bank, and ſubſcribed about 160,000 l. for beginning the buſineſs, binding at ſame time their whole fortunes, to the extent of about ſix millions, in ſecurity for the engagements of the company. This was the Bank of

Air.

Air.—The management of this ſociety, like all others, fell into the hands of four or five people, whoſe local reſidence, leiſure and inclination, admitted of regular attendance. Thoſe gentlemen, who were unacquainted with trade, attended more to the general principle of their inſtitution, the encouragement of the agriculture and trade of Scotland, than to the natural ſlow progreſs of a circulation of notes. They lent faſter than they could get their notes to circulate through the country. The conſequence of which was, That they ſupplied the void by their credit with the London bankers, and in June 1772, they had 350,000 l. of bills running on London.

The Bank of England had found the ſame diſtreſs, for ſome years, in a leſſer degree; for though I will not aver that they had much increaſed the ſum of their notes during that period, becauſe I have not ſufficient evidence of the fact;

fact; yet, it will be allowed, they had not diminiſhed the extent of their dealings, and the ſame ſum that they had formerly circulated, could not continue to float in the country; becauſe every trading town in England has of late years got a bank, which ſends forth its notes in its own corner, and thus occupies in part, the ground formerly poſſeſſed by the Bank.——To make this more plain, I beg leave to obſerve, that a certain ſum of money is neceſſary for circulating the trade of every country; and whether that ſum conſiſt of gold, ſilver, or paper, it makes no difference, (provided the credit of the paper be fully ſupported) as far as it is employed for the purpoſe of internal commerce. But, as the precious metals are the only common monies uſed in Europe, where any country is poſſeſſed of more current money than anſwers the purpoſe of its internal commerce, the ſurplus of coin and precious metals will immediately be exported. Let me

put

put the caſe of a market being over-ſtocked with any other commodity, and it will ſtrike every man that this muſt be the conſequence: For the owner of that commodity will immediately caſt about and export what is above the demand to ſome other market where it is more in requeſt. The great misfortune of this ſubject is the perplexity with which it has been treated by moſt writers, who have conceived money to be ſomething different from any other commodity or article of trade, whereas it ſhould be conſidered intirely in the ſame point of view. Gold and ſilver are no articles of conſumption, nor do they produce any profit, but in ſo far as they are employed in exchange or barter for other commodities, therefore no man keeps them but as vehicles or machines for acquiring other articles, they being univerſally admitted as equivalents for and repreſentations of all other commodities; wherefore the quantity of theſe precious metals is limited in every country to its

uſe

uſe and wants in this way, ſo that the moment the quantity exceeds what is neceſſary for circulating the commerce of any country, the ſurplus will be exported to other countries for commodities of more real uſe, and where the demand is greater. But paper being confined to the country where it can command gold and ſilver, whenever there is a ſuperabundance of it, the paper muſt remain in circulation, whilſt the gold and ſilver, not being in demand more than to circulate the paper, will be carried off. As ſoon as this comes to be the caſe, the exchange turns againſt that country, becauſe no man will carry away the metals whilſt he can get bills as cheap to anſwer his purpoſe abroad; nor will any man export gold but for a profit, which profit he makes by ſelling his bill on Holland or France at a high exchange for the amount of the gold ſo carried off. What was the reaſon that, previous to the calamities of 1772, gold was at 4 l. 2 s. per ounce, and

ſilver

ſilver at 5 s. 8 d. per ounce? The principles juſt now explained will enable us to anſwer this queſtion. The reaſon was, that the quantity of paper money was greater than what anſwered the internal purpoſes of the country, for which reaſon the metals were continually ſeeking a market abroad, where they were in demand, and where the paper ceaſed to be a commodity, and by this conſtant exportation they became ſcarce and dear. As a further proof of this we may obſerve, that the exchange was againſt Britain with all Europe at the time that the gold and ſilver was ſo dear and ſcarce; whereas had this ſcarcity ariſen from a want of money, the exchange would have been in her favour. For whenever the Bank diminiſhed the circulation of notes, as we ſhall immediately relate, ſo as to make money ſcarce for the purpoſe of internal commerce, gold and ſilver became plentier than ever, the prices of both fell, and the foreign ex-

changes have been ever ſince in our favour.

The Bank of England then finding it neceſſary to leſſen the circulation of her notes, fixed upon the Scots paper as the firſt object for this purpoſe, and in June, 1772, took at once the reſolution of refuſing every Scots bill. What their reaſon was for this undiſtinguiſhed rejection, no private man has a title to aſk. —No man can believe that humour, paſſion, or reſentment could enter into this meaſure; far leſs will it be ſuppoſed that any jealouſy of the Scots manufactures, or predilection for the German, could operate. The miſchief, however, was great; a run immediately was made on the Air Bank; their whole notes were brought in againſt them; and their debt to England was, by paying off their notes in Scotland, increaſed to 600,000 *l.* in a few months.—This meaſure of the Bank of England could not ariſe from any doubt of the ſecurity, becauſe that

would

would imply an ignorance which cannot be preſumed in ſuch a reſpectable ſociety; and the world is, by this time, perfectly convinced, that there never were grounds for any ſuſpicion on this head; the Air Bank having given ſuperabundant landed ſecurity for every ſhilling of debt contracted by them.—The ſtop of diſcounts at the Bank with regard to Scots bills was general; and the effect was proportioned to the cauſe. The almoſt unlimited facility with which all Scots bills had been diſcounted until the 20th of June, 1772, had led the London correſpondents of that country to rely on the diſcount of the bills ſent them from Scotland for their payments. The ſudden and unforeſeen ſtop of all diſcounts did therefore occaſion four or five of them to ceaſe making payments. But all or moſt of them have ſince gone on and ſatisfied every engagement.—This violent operation did not however relieve the Bank of England, until, by diminiſhing ſtill greatly the other channels of her diſ-

counts, her notes in the circle were reduced to the ſum that was barely neceſſary for the accommodation of the public; ſince which, gold and ſilver have ſunk down to the coinage prices; and this will always be the caſe whilſt the currency of the country, whether coin or paper, is no more than ſufficient for the purpoſes of internal commerce.—The diſtreſs in Scotland was, however, great, in conſequence of the ſtop of the Air Bank. A general diffidence and diſcredit took place over the whole country; and nothing can ſhew the true ſituation of things there in a clearer point of view, than that amidſt all this great and general diſtreſs, only five houſes ſtopt, and of theſe the principal and greater part have paid or ſatisfied their creditors by ſecurities.—Let me not be miſunderſtood.—I do not under this aſſertion include the failure of a banking houſe in London, although one of four partners happened to be a Scotſman; neither do I include the conſequences of that failure, although they ruined

three

three houſes, two in London, and one in Scotland, becauſe they were previous to the ſtopping of diſcounts by the Bank; and as well might the Dutch impute to England the failure of the Cliffords of Amſterdam, becauſe they are Engliſh ſubjects, as to impute the convulſions in Scotland to the failure of that banking houſe, with whom they had no other connection than that one of the partners was from that country.—But Mr. Glover has avoided to particularize the tranſactions of private men, and he did it wiſely; firſt, becauſe ſuch kind of diſcuſſions, unleſs for important and public benefit, is indecent, and even unjuſt, and the man who attempts it, ſhould himſelf be above all reproach.—The principles and motives of conduct in individuals are latent and unknown, and from ignorance in this particular, many a man has ſuffered cenſure when he deſerved applauſe.—I will alſo inform Mr. Glover, if he does not know it,—That there were men involved in theſe affairs,

who

who ſtand high in the opinion of thoſe who know them, and of their country in general, both as to worth and abilities, and who, if they choſe to enter the liſts upon this occaſion, would ſoon make it unneceſſary for either of us to attempt the illuſtration of this ſubject.

I will now conclude what I have to ſay on this head by one aſſertion, which Mr. Glover may deny if he can.—That in the whole of the bad affairs, within theſe two years paſt, ariſing from whatever cauſe, whether from misfortune or miſconduct either of individuals or of publick bodies, all England cannot aſcertain a loſs of 10,000 l. by Scotland.

Let not men be impoſed on by words; a circulation of 600,000 l. has a mighty ſound.—A Bank in Air, was wit in the mouths of thoſe who uſed the word.—But mighty as the ſum of 600,000 l. may ſound when applied to Scotland—Mr. Glover knows of a ſingle houſe in a very

a very different quarter, which failed within theſe eighteen months, and whoſe ſingle circulation was equal to this ſum, three-fourths of which are loſt.—Did this excite any clamour againſt Holland? Yet the loſs to England by that ſingle houſe is greater, I will venture to maintain, than has been loſt by all Scotland ſince the Union.

I will not examine the principles upon which Mr. Glover was pleaſed to lay open in this houſe, any information he may have received from the Bank of Air, either by peruſing their books or papers, or in private converſations with the managers. But I would aſk, upon what principle is a whole country to be arraigned, for the error or miſconduct of four or five men? Was the Engliſh nation ever reproached for the groſs abuſes committed by individuals in the South-Sea year? Are the great yearly and daily bankruptcies with which our Gazette is filled, owing to the imprudence or miſ-

fortune of individuals, conſidered as a reflection on the nation?——One thing muſt have occurred to Mr. Glover in examining the affairs of the Air Bank, which is ſingular, though exactly true, that amongſt the immenſe ſums lent out by, and due to that company, there is nothing owing by the linen dealers or manufacturers of Scotland. The managers of that ſociety were landed men, and the farmers and improvers of land were, they thought, the moſt uſeful citizens, and were as ſuch ſupported by them. With what grounds can it then be ſaid, that the linen manufacture was injured by the Air Bank? or for what purpoſe was it introduced into this queſtion, unleſs to ſhew Mr. Glover's great importance?

To conclude: If this houſe ſhall be ſatisfied that the linen manufacture ſuffers greatly from the interference of the German goods—If you are ſatisfied that the home trade is of more conſequence than the

the foreign to this nation; that our own manufactures deſerve encouragement rather than thoſe of foreigners; that the diſtreſs of the linen trade proceeds from the weight of parliamentary taxes, and that it is therefore a duty of the legiſlature to ſupport our manufactures under this preſſure; we ſhall humbly hope for relief. If this relief is only to be obtained by additional taxes on the foreign linens, I hope parliament will not be deterred from impoſing them, either by groundleſs apprehenſions of reſentment from German princes, or the bugbear idea of encouraging ſmuggling; but will conſider the importance of enabling the induſtrious weaver to gain his ſubſiſtence at home, and not reduce him to the neceſſity of emigrating to America. The woollen manufacture was gained to Britain by the oppreſſion of the government of Spain; let us not loſe the linen by a ſimilar conduct.

FINIS.

FINIS